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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 005937

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR PRM/ANE

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TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [TH](#) [KN](#) [KS](#) [DPRK](#)

SUBJECT: UNHCR UPDATE ON DPRK REFUGEE IN THAILAND

REF: BANGKOK 00484

Classified By: POLITICAL OFFICER JAMES COLE. REASON 1.4 (B,D)

1. (C) Summary. North Korean refugee Mr. Park Tae-Hung continues to reside in Thailand illegally and appears to have moved from Pattaya to Bangkok. UNHCR has been in sporadic contact with him since June and is prepared to refer him on an immediate basis to the ROK Embassy for resettlement. End Summary.

2. (C) Acting Refcoord spoke with UNHCR Chief Protection Officer Giuseppe de Vincentis on 15 September to review the status of North Korean refugee Park Tae-Hung. De Vincentis confirmed that UNHCR interviewed Park in June and has been in sporadic contact with him since. Ten days ago UNHCR learned from a TIME Magazine journalist that Mr. Park recently moved from Pattaya to Bangkok.

3. (C) When queried on the status of his case with UNHCR, de Vincentis outlined the current informal "pipeline" that they use to resettle North Koreans (Ref). UNHCR has two criteria when interviewing North Koreans: determining that they are Korean and that they are willing to relocate to South Korea. Once these two requirements have been met, the individual is quietly referred to the ROK Embassy in Bangkok which quickly handles the resettlement. During their interview of Mr. Park in June, UNHCR was able to satisfy the first criterion, but Mr. Park appeared only interested in relocating to Japan or the U.S.

4. (C) De Vincentis explained that his office is considering contacting Mr. Park to see if he has reconsidered the ROK option. If so, UNHCR would refer him "immediately" to the South Korean Embassy for swift resettlement.
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